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BOOK DEPARTMENT.

NOTES.

MR. ARMITAGE SMITH'S little book on the "Citizen of England" * is adapted to the Evening Combination School work under the English Educational Code. It aims to meet the demand for a clear and concise account of the topics connected with the rights and duties of citizens. The descriptions are necessarily brief. Five pages, for example, are given to the parish, twenty-three pages to the central government, ten pages to the system of taxation, etc. It is evidently intended as a manual for boys and girls of twelve to fifteen, and is an evidence of the growing interest in England in the education of the individual for the exercise of his duties and privileges as a citizen.

MR. OSSIAN D. ASHLEY, President of the Wabash Railroad Company, contributed last year to the *Railway Age* a series of fourteen papers, in which he discussed the real and ideal relation of Railways and Their Employes.† The papers have now been printed in book form. The first half of the book deals in a suggestive way with the successful results of co-operation between employers and employed. The evil results of strikes are pointed out; the benefits of railway department relief and insurance; the advantages of profit-sharing, and the successful results of experiments in co-operation are set forth. The second half of the book deals with socialism and is far less satisfactory. The author apparently became more interested in socialism as he proceeded with the preparation of his series of papers, and was led on to the writing of six chapters where two would have been sufficient. While the book makes no important contribution to the subject of the relation of railways and their employes; it is, nevertheless, suggestive and will doubtless accomplish good by disseminating ideas which are, on the whole, sound.

THE SEVENTH VOLUME of Booth's "Life and Labour of the People in London" ‡ continues the analysis and description of the population in respect to employment and conditions of labor which was begun in the fifth volume and continued in the sixth. The method

* *The Citizen of England. His Rights and Duties.* By G. ARMITAGE SMITH. M. A. Pp. 192. London and Edinburgh: W. & R. Chambers, 1895.

† *Railways and Their Employes.* By OSSIAN D. ASHLEY. Pp. 213. Chicago: *The Railway Age and Northwestern Railroad.* 1895.

‡ *Life and Labour of the People in London.* Vol. vii. Edited by CHARLES BOOTH. Pp. 503. Price, \$3. London and New York: Macmillan & Co., 1896.

of treatment is the same as that of the preceding volumes, described in the *ANNALS* for November, 1895. This account of trades and occupations, at first designed for one volume, is still incomplete at the close of the third volume. Of the sixteen general divisions of occupations the present volume covers five; viz.: Dress, Food and Drink, Dealers and Clerks, Locomotion and Labor. Four divisions—Public Service, Professional, Pensioners and Means and Domestic Service remain for treatment in the next volume, which is expected to give also "the general results of the investigation summarized and considered."

The author states* that throughout the inquiry he has "leaned to the safe side, preferring to paint things too dark rather than too bright." The present volume deals largely with the poorest paid labor in over-populated London, yet the tone of this, as of the preceding volumes, is decidedly hopeful. The following paragraph is characteristic: "Until comparatively recent years, it was the invariable practice for grocery warehousemen to live and board on the premises, but the custom now appears to be extinct. With the decay of this practice the position of the men seems to have greatly improved; their wages are higher than they were, and the hours very much shorter. The head of the largest firm in London told us that not more than thirty years ago work continued daily till nine o'clock, and on Saturdays till eleven, while holidays were unknown. With shorter hours and better pay there has been a vast improvement in the manners and morals of the men." (p. 216.) "Living in" is still very common, especially for the assistants in retail stores, but is giving way to the general demand for liberty and personal choice.

One of the most gloomy pictures is that of the drapers' assistants: "Unless a girl has an exceptionally strong constitution, the excessive strain soon tells on her health; and thus it happens that many have to leave the trade, whilst others give up for a time, only to be again invalided soon after they return to the shop life. Some of the evil effects might be lessened by the general provision of seats for assistants. . . . Unfortunately, seats behind the counter are only provided in a small minority of shops, and even in these establishments they are seldom used. Assistants are afraid to be seen sitting down." (p. 77.)

Special interest attaches to London dock labor, the conditions of which have been much improved in spite of the greatest difficulties. The simple and casual character of the work makes it available for improvident men who care to work only when driven to it by pressure of want. As a result, according to the estimates made in 1887 some twelve thousand men were depending for their

† Vol. i, p. 5.

livelihood upon the dock labor of East London, which was only sufficient to give steady employment for five thousand men. * Since the strike of 1889 a considerable improvement has been brought about in some of the docks by means of the list system. "There are (1) the permanent men; (2) those having first preference, (list A), all of whom are now engaged by the week; (3) the second preference, (list B); and (4) the third preference (list C); and there may be others who, though not listed, are dock laborers by profession."

Each man has a ticket corresponding to his number on the list. They are moved up and down according to regularity of attendance, and have priority of work, according to their position on the list. Thus the loafers are being forced out. The service has become more efficient, and wages have been increased.

"*Le Problème Monétaire et la Question Sociale*" is the title of an article by Professor Ch. M. Limousin in *La Société Nouvelle*. The chief evil of our modern monetary system he finds in the fact that the business world is in the habit of ascribing fixity of value to the precious metals. As a remedy he proposes the repeal of all legislation defining the standard of value in terms of gold or silver. He would have free coinage of both metals, but the stamp of the government would merely certify to the weight and fineness of the coin without fixing its money value. Gold and silver would continue to be used as a medium of exchange, but, no longer constituting the standard, they would vary in price like all other commodities. The standard of value—the money in terms of which all prices would be expressed—would be a paper currency, varying in purchasing power with the efficiency of labor. He has not shown how the increase in the efficiency of labor can be measured or the fall in prices can be made to conform to it, but seems to think that if the paper circulating medium were relieved of all dependence on commodities and made a mere sign or symbol of value, its purchasing power would be exempt from all variations except such as might be traced to changes in the value of individual commodities.

MR. MARCH'S BOOK on the "Paris Commune of 1871"† will disappoint all thoughtful readers, and will certainly fail to engage the attention of any other class. While the work is not without a formal accuracy it exhibits no philosophical grasp of the subject, and its style would deprive even the most exciting and dramatic events of

* Vol. i, pp. 18-25.

† *History of the Paris Commune of 1871*. By THOMAS MARCH. Pp. 372. Price, \$2.00. London: Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., 1896.

interest. Mr. March has chosen to begin *in medias res*. He conceives that the popular movement which he describes took its rise, matured and ended in the brief space of a year. It is easy to see how false a treatment such a thesis implies. One may reasonably doubt whether the author knew much of the history of modern France. He certainly makes no pertinent references to the numerous archetypal occurrences which go so far to explain the events of 1871. The style is heavy, although the reader is occasionally startled by the sudden interjection of a pseudo-Carlylean phrase. There are abrupt transitions from the past to the present tense, presumably with the purpose of heightening the effect, as, for example, "This Commune of Paris must be put down, thought the assembled Deputies at Versailles, and the little man, Thiers, is eager to execute their orders." The reader's interest is stimulated by such phrases as "A vociferating crowd denounced him as a gendarme, and the crowds' ears had to be tickled with his blood." While the author scoffs at the French habit of "affixing an inoffensive and intrinsically meaningless date" as the most convenient label on their "kaleidoscopolical political events," he is unable to discover any more effective system of rubrics, and his chapters are headed: "January, 1871," "April 14, 1871," "May 13, 1871," "May 17, 1871," etc. This entirely deprives the works of that amiable quality which the Germans call *Uebersichtlichkeit*. It is a pity that another volume should be added to the vast aggregate of poor and mediocre historical treatises.

THE CALL for the third edition of Professor Nicholson's lucid exposition* of the principles and problems of monetary science is a hopeful sign. Two essays of the former edition, "Living Capital," and "Capital and Labor—their Relative Strength," have been omitted. The only addition to notice is the new second part to the treatise on money. This new part deals almost entirely with the effects of the recent gold discoveries and the depreciation of the price of silver on prices and industry, and sets forth the necessity of an international agreement as to the ratio at which governments will coin gold and silver. There is considerable reiteration, with new illustrative materials, of principles enunciated in the first part. Professor Nicholson insists that money is not "a mere commodity," and comes again to the defence of the quantity theory.

THE STRONGEST OBJECTION to the introduction of political economy into the courses of study of secondary schools is the absence of

**A Treatise on Money and Essays on Monetary Problems*. By J. SHIELD NICHOLSON. Third Edition (with new second part to Treatise on Money). Price, \$2.00. New York: Macmillan & Co., 1895.

suitable text-books. This objection was urged by the "Committee of Ten;" by the members of the American Economic Association, who, in the New York Session of 1894, took ground against the formal study of economics in secondary schools; and, most strongly of all, by the teachers themselves, many of whom have confessed to the present writer their utter inability to find a suitable text. Professor Thompson's "Political Economy for High Schools and Academies"* will not satisfy objectors of the first and second classes, but possibly the teachers, who, after all, will decide the matter, may find it more nearly the precise thing they need than any previous work.

The chief defect of this book is its meagreness. With barely a hundred duodecimo pages, no index, one-half page table of contents, no bibliography or suggestions for collateral reading, no notes or diagrams: the book obviously lacks both essentials and conveniences. Some statements tempt controversy; *e. g.*, "good government costs more than bad:" "the United States of America . . . has four governments—National, State, County and Township or Municipal—at every point"—(p. 62). "It (protection) has the sanction of even free traders in their wiser moments, and can be defended as a benefit to all classes"—(p. 102). But the text is straightforward and candid, and the discussion of even such subjects as Bimetallism and Free Trade is in excellent temper. There is little at which to cavil in Dr. Thompson's statement of the position of his opponents, however incomplete the argument in behalf of his own position may appear.

The book is entitled to much more than this negative praise. It is written in a lucid, vigorous style, a most important consideration in text-books. It abounds in happy and telling illustrations. The condensation is wisely managed, not by over compact development of the subjects discussed, but rather by the omission of many topics altogether. The author's faculty for seeming continuity, without omitting any of those aspects of his subject, which are likely to prove most interesting, which has been tested in many University Extension courses, does good service in the present work. He has made political economy interesting, and at the same time has indicated its close relation to the political issues of the day, concerning which high school students already have their opinions.

REVIEWS.

The Law of Civilization and Decay; An Essay on History. By BROOKS ADAMS. Pp. 302. Price, \$2.50. London: Swan, Sonnenschein & Co. New York: Macmillan & Co., 1895.

* *Political Economy for High Schools and Academies.* By ROBERT ELLIS THOMPSON, A. M., S. T. D. Pp. 108. Price, 55 cents. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1895.